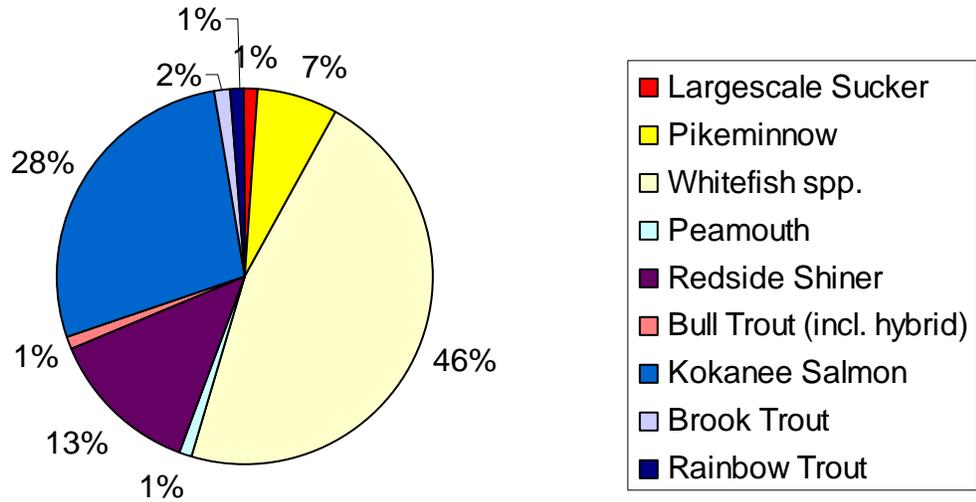Summary Report of 2005 Live Trap Effort in Swan Lake

Three Merwin trap nets and three fyke nets were set by Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks personnel on Oct 17-19, 2005 on Swan Lake. Nets were set at general locations agreed upon by the working group and generally were 10-15 deep. The nets were checked three times a week by Forest Service personnel and volunteers. The objective was to live capture lake trout (and remove any juvenile lake trout). All other species were released with measurements of total length of game species (to nearest centimeter) and total count of all species. Surveyors visually noted hybrids of bull trout x brook trout and also cutthroat trout x rainbow trout, but no genetic samples were collected. The nets fished for a total of 142 net nights and were removed November 15, 2005. No vandalism, damage or unintended bycatch was observed and only a small percentage of fish perished (estimated less than 10 individuals).

No lake trout were caught in any net.

A total of 3,825 fish were captured and released. Eighteen species (including suspected hybrids) were categorized but mountain whitefish and pygmy whitefish were combined and not separately identified in the field. All three Merwin nets successfully captured fish, especially the trap set on the south bay very near the highway. The three fyke nets were quite unsuccessful with two nets failing to capture any fish and the third net caught only 3 individuals.

The following chart illustrates the total percentage of catch for all nets combined. For clarity, this chart does not illustrate uncommon species (less than 10 individuals caught total). The additional species captured in the lake are northern pike (2), yellow perch (8), cutthroat trout (9), hybrid cutthroat x rainbow trout (4), slimy sculpin (1), brook stickleback (1), central mudminnow (2), and pumpkinseed sunfish (1).

Total Catch (excluding species with n<10)

Legend:
- Largescale Sucker
- Pikeminnow
- Whitefish spp.
- Peamouth
- Redside Shiner
- Bull Trout (incl. hybrid)
- Kokanee Salmon
- Brook Trout
- Rainbow Trout

Pie chart values: 1%, 1%, 7%, 46%, 1%, 13%, 1%, 28%, 2%

An Excel spreadsheet has been created with the data collected. If you wish to query by net or by date or by species, it should be pretty easy. For example, here is the catch rate of whitefish species over the project duration. See Beth Gardner or Scott Rumsey for a copy of this spreadsheet.

Line chart (Whitefish spp.) with x-axis dates: 10/17/2005, 10/24/2005, 10/31/2005, 11/7/2005 and y-axis 0 to 600.